VIRGINIA'S CAREER READINESS CERTIFICATE
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES GUIDELINES
SEPTEMBER 30, 2004

Developed by the State Career Readiness Certificate Taskforce

I. Career Readiness Certificate Overview

Virginia's Career Readiness Certificate certifies core employability skills required across multiple industries and occupations. The Career Readiness Certificate is a portable credential that promotes career development and skill attainment for the individual, and confirms to employers that an individual possesses basic workplace skills in reading, applied math, and locating information – skills that most jobs require.

A Multi-Level Approach: Bronze, Silver and Gold Level Certificates

Virginia's Career Readiness Certificate has three levels: *Bronze, Silver* and *Gold*. The three levels allow an individual to advance his or her reading, applied math, and locating information skill levels in order to qualify for more jobs.

- *Bronze Level* –An individual achieving this level of certification possesses core employability skills for approximately 30% of the jobs profiled by WorkKeys in these skill areas.
- *Silver Level* - An individual achieving this level of certification possesses core employability skills for approximately 65% of the jobs profiled by WorkKeys in these skill areas.
- *Gold Level* - An individual achieving this level of certification possesses core employability skills for approximately 85% of the jobs profiled by WorkKeys in these skill areas.

Assessment Used to Certify Career Readiness

To earn a Career Readiness Certificate, individuals are tested in reading, applied math, and locating information through the *WorkKeys* employability skills assessment system. As a result of the testing, individuals earn a Career Readiness Certificate or identify areas in which they need further training to obtain the certificate.

WorkKeys is a comprehensive employability skills assessment tool designed to help employers and individuals develop better workplace skills. Thousands of companies in the United States and internationally use WorkKeys skill assessments, job profiles, training evaluations, and research and reporting services to assess skill needs and measure progress.

Obtaining the Virginia Career Readiness Certificate

An individual can receive a Career Readiness Certificate by testing at the appropriate skill levels on the *WorkKeys* assessments. *WorkKeys* assessments may be taken at one of 44 One-Stop Centers or one of the 23 Community Colleges located throughout the Commonwealth.

For individuals who do not initially achieve the certificate, assessment results will indicate enhancement training needed in order to achieve the skill levels necessary to obtain the certificate.

One-Stop career centers partner with postsecondary education to ensure that training and education opportunities are available to meet targeted training needs based on the *WorkKeys* assessment.

Preparation of Individuals for Jobs in Specific Industries or Occupations
The Career Readiness Certificate is an employability credential that reflects an individual's attainment of certain core employability skills required across many industries and occupations. Virginia's multi-level approach to career readiness credentialing allows the individual to improve skill levels over time through work experience or additional training, which may be industry or occupation specific. The Career Readiness Certificate is one component of an emerging statewide system of portable skills credentials that integrates and promotes the attainment of academic, employability and industry/occupation specific skills by individuals in order to qualify for current and anticipated jobs in the Commonwealth.

Skill Level Table (See Attachment I for Full Description of Skill Levels)

VIRGINIA'S CAREER READINESS CERTIFICATE			
Level	**Skill Area**	**Skill Level**	**Individual Can:**
Bronze	Reading for Information	3 (range = 3-7)	Identify key concepts and simple details. Recognize the proper time to perform a task. *(See Attachment I for Full Description of Skill Levels)*
	Applied Mathematics	3 (range = 3-7)	Add, subtract, multiply and divide. Calculate the correct change in a simple financial transaction. *(See Attachment I for Full Description of Skill Levels)*
	Locating Information	3 (range = 3-6)	Find information in charts and graphs and fill in one or two pieces of missing information in charts and graphs. *(See Attachment I for Full Description of Skill Levels)*
Silver	Reading for Information	4 (range = 3-7)	Decide appropriate behavior based upon written policies and procedures. Identify important details and recognize and apply complex instructions. *(See Attachment I for Full Description of Skill Levels)*
	Applied Mathematics	4 (range = 3-7)	Add, subtract, multiply, and divide positive or negative numbers, including fractions, decimals, and percentages. Calculate averages, simple ratios, proportions, and rates. Read a simple chart or graph to obtain information to solve a problem. *(See Attachment I for Full Description of Skill Levels)*
	Locating Information	4 (range = 3-6)	Summarize and/or compare information and trends in charts and graphs. *(See Attachment I for Full Description of Skill Levels)*
Gold	Reading for Information	5 (range = 3-7)	Recognize the application of technical terms or jargon to stated situations. Identify the appropriate definition of a word with multiple meanings. Apply instructions to new situations. *(See Attachment I for Full Description of Skill Levels)*
	Applied Mathematics	5 (range = 3-7)	Calculate perimeters of basic shapes, percent discounts or mark-ups and complete a balance sheet or order form. *(See Attachment I for Full Description of Skill Levels)*
	Locating Information	5 (range = 3-6)	Summarize and/or compare information and trends in charts and graphs and identify their interrelatedness. *(See Attachment I for Full Description of Skill Levels)*

II. Career Readiness Certificate Policies

Virginia's Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) is recognized as Virginia's core employability skills credential and is issued by the Governor of the Commonwealth and supported by the Virginia Workforce Council (VWC). In addition, the CRC is endorsed by the Virginia State Chamber of Commerce, the Virginia Manufacturers Association, the Virginia Economic Developers Association and the Virginia Chapter of the AFL-CIO. The Special Advisor to the Governor for Workforce Development and the VWC provide system oversight of the CRC initiative. The Virginia Community College System (VCCS), through its 23 community colleges, facilitates the local CRC process.

Any resident of the Commonwealth may pursue the CRC. Local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) are encouraged to develop local policies that authorize use of WIA funds for CRC attainment. Regarding WIA eligible individuals, the local WIB may require a certain percentage of funds to be used for CRC assessments and related gap training and/or set a local system performance measure for "career readiness" using CRC attainment as the metric.

Community College WorkKeys Administrators, in partnership with the WIB, One-Stop Operators/Managers and program partners (See Attachment II – *Local Partner Programs*), are responsible for developing a local process for obtaining the CRC, including the integration of service delivery systems (See Attachment III – *Local Career Readiness Certificate Administration Agreement Items*). The agreement should outline (1) the specific services to be provided, (2) the fees associated with said services and (3) the specific roles and responsibilities of each party to the agreement. WorkKeys assessments will be administered locally at locations that meet ACT testing administration guidelines. Community Colleges will score non-computer based WorkKeys assessments, distribute the CRC and perform CRC data collection functions. Agreements must include the administering of CRC WorkKeys assessments at the one-stop career center based upon identified customer needs.

III. Career Readiness Certificate Data Collection

Community Colleges use the state developed and maintained Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) database for CRC data collection. The database is internet-based and password protected. It is envisioned that the CRC database will become fully integrated with other career development services provided through the workforce and career development system. (State database administration and oversight TBD.)

Each individual seeking the CRC is required to complete a CRC Registration and Release form before taking the CRC WorkKeys assessments (see Attachment IV – *Career Readiness Certificate Registration and Release Form*).   The release allows information to be shared with the WIB, the One-Stop career center and all partner agencies to ensure seamless services are provided to the individual.

The WorkKeys Administrator will enter all data related to the CRC (including the data obtained on the Registration and Release form) and maintain all local CRC participant records. The WorkKeys Administrator will ensure the integrity of the CRC by adhering to all administering, proctoring and scoring standards as set forth by ACT WorkKeys.

Only authorized CRC database users will have access to the database for data entry and review purposes. The CRC website will allow various stakeholders and customers to query the database for non-individual specific information.

IV. Career Readiness Certificate Distribution

To ensure the integrity of the Career Readiness Certificate (CRC), the VCCS and its member colleges have been designated to manage the CRC distribution process at the state and local levels.

Through local agreements with their WIB and One-Stop Operator/Manager, Community Colleges will be responsible for designing local processes and procedures to administer and score the CRC WorkKeys assessments, enter CRC participant data, print (and reprint) CRCs and provide the CRC to the participant.

The Workforce Development Services (WDS) Division of the VCCS will serve as the primary state contact for CRC production printing and distribution. The VCCS WDS will provide pre-printed CRCs to local Community Colleges upon request. Community Colleges will be responsible for printing the CRC recipient's name, date issued and certificate identifier on the pre-printed CRC using the template provided by the State.

V. Career Readiness Certificate Website

To provide consistent and accurate information on the Career Readiness Certificate (CRC), WIBs, One-Stop career centers and Community Colleges use the state CRC website (TBD – may be included in an existing website) for local CRC marketing and outreach efforts. The state CRC website contains information for employers, jobseekers, educators, economic developers and workforce developers. The CRC web address (and link as appropriate) should be included on all local career development/advancement printed materials and websites.

VI. Career Readiness Certificate Costs

Costs associated with the Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) are determined locally and set forth in the local *Career Readiness Certificate Administration Agreement*. Costs will be identified locally for the following:

- Administering CRC WorkKeys assessments
- Scoring CRC WorkKeys assessments
- CRC participant data entry
- Printing and providing the CRC (includes original CRC and five copies)
- Reprinting the CRC

As the CRC Program Administrator, the VCCS may monitor costs to determine consistency statewide, as appropriate.

VII. Career Readiness Certificate Training

There are two types of training associated with the Career Readiness Certificate (CRC): (1) specific **enhancement training** to fill the gaps in one's skills as indicated by CRC WorkKeys assessment scores (i.e. training needed to obtain a Bronze, Silver or Gold CRC) and (2) **work readiness training** to ensure the individual has core employability skills and knowledge of basic workplace readiness skills (i.e. punctuality, work ethic, team building, etc.) to become employed.

Enhancement Training is provided using WorkKeys certified curricula offered by KeyTrain, WIN or other vendors. The curricula are designed to target the specific skill development needs of the individual to obtain the desired CRC and are available through computer-based training or traditional instruction.

Work Readiness Training has two major training components (1) core employability skills training that leads to obtainment of the CRC, and (2) employer-identified workplace readiness skills training (i.e. punctuality, work ethic, team building, etc.) that prepares an individual for the workplace. At a minimum, work readiness training will result in the attainment of the desired CRC. A separate certificate of program completion may be issued by the training institution. (- -COMING SOON - - Please visit http://www.vccs.edu/workforce/WDS/about.htm for a list of *Workplace Readiness Training and Descriptions.*)

Attachment I – Skill Level Table – Full Description

Attachment II – Local Partner Programs

Attachment III - Local Career Readiness Certificate Administration Agreement Items

Attachment IV – Career Readiness Certificate Registration and Release Form (TBD)

Attachment I – Skill Level Table – Full Description

	VIRGINIA'S CAREER READINESS CERTIFICATE		
Level	**Skill Area**	**Skill Level**	**Individual Can:**
Bronze	Reading for Information	3 (range = 3-7)	At Level 3, employees must read basic company policies, procedures, and announcements. These work place reading materials are short, simple, and use elementary vocabulary. All information employees need in order to choose an appropriate course of action is stated clearly in the materials; employees do not need to read between the lines. Employees are required to understand the meaning of words that are defined in these workplace reading materials, figure out the meaning of elementary words that are not defined in these reading materials, understand the main ideas and straightforward details from these reading materials, understand when to perform each step in a series from reading directions, and be able to apply instructions outlined in these reading materials to situations described in these reading materials.
	Applied Mathematics	3 (range = 3-7)	At Level 3, employees are required to do one step of mathematical operation (i.e., addition, subtraction) on positive or negative numbers, and multiplication and division of only positive numbers (e.g., 20), and change a number from one form to another, using whole numbers (e.g., 10), fractions (e.g., ½), decimals (e.g., .75) or percentages (e.g., 12%); for instance, employees may be required to convert 3/8 to its equivalent percentage.
	Locating Information	3 (range = 3-6)	At Level 3, employees must read elementary workplace graphics such as simple order forms, bar graphs, tables, flowcharts, maps, instrument gauges, and floor plans. Employees are required to find one or two pieces of information in these types of graphics, and fill in one or two pieces of information that are missing from these types of graphics (usually forms).

Silver	Reading for Information	4 (range = 3-7)	At Level 4, employees must read straightforward company policies, procedures, and announcements that contain a number of details and describe procedures, which involve several steps. Many of the reading materials describe policies and procedures that required employees to take changing circumstances into account in identifying the course of action that will best accomplish their goals. Employees are required to notice important details in these reading materials, figure out the meaning of words that are not defined in these reading materials, apply instructions, some of which involve several steps, to situations described in these reading materials, take changing circumstances into account in order to decide what to do, and recognize cause-effect relationships.
	Applied Mathematics	4 (range = 3-7)	**At Level 4**, employees are required to do one or two mathematical operations, such as addition, subtraction, or multiplication, on several positive or negative numbers (e.g., 10, -2), as well as division of only positive numbers, figure out averages (e.g., (10+11+12)/3), simple ratios (e.g., ¾), simple proportions (e.g., 10/100 cases), or rates (e.g., 10 mph) using whole numbers and decimals, add commonly known fractions, decimals, or percentages (e.g., ½, .75, 25%), or add three fractions that share a common denominator (e.g., 1/8 + 3/8 +7/8), reorder information before performing calculations, and read a simple diagram or graph to get the information needed to solve a problem.
	Locating Information	4 (range = 3-6)	At Level 4, employees must read straightforward workplace graphics, such as basic order forms, line graphs, standard tables, basic diagrams, flowcharts, instrument gauges, and maps. Employees are required to find several pieces of information in these types of graphics, summarize and/or compare information and trends in a single graphic. summarize and/or compare information and trends presented in more than one workplace graphic, such as a bar chart and a table showing related information, and determine the relationships among graphics.

Gold	Reading for Information	5 (range = 3-7)	At Level 5, employees Employees must read moderately detailed and complicated company policies, procedures, and announcements. These reading materials contain words and phrases that may be specialized (jargon and technical language) or words that have several meanings. All of the information employees need is stated clearly in the reading materials, but the employees must consider several factors in order to identify the course of action that will accomplish their goals. Employees are required to understand the paraphrased definition of specialized words or phrases (jargon or technical terms) defined in these reading materials, use jargon or technical terms appropriately in describing situations stated in these reading materials, understand the meaning of acronyms defined in these reading materials (an acronym is a word or collection of letters which stands for a longer phrase, such as HMO to mean Health Maintenance Organization), figure out which definition of a word with multiple meanings in appropriate in the context of these reading materials, apply information given in these reading materials to situations that are not directly described, but similar, and apply instructions or procedures with a number of steps to described situations. These instructions may include conditionals (if X happens, then you should do Y).
	Applied Mathematics	5 (range = 3-7)	**At Level 5,** employees are required to look up a formula and change from one unit to another unit of measurement within a system of measurement (e.g., from ounces to pounds) or between systems of measurements (e.g., from centimeters to inches), calculate using mixed units (e.g., 3.50 hours and 4 hours 30 minutes), do several steps of logic and calculations, including division of negative numbers, decide what information, calculations or unit conversions are needed to find a solution, and determine the best deal using one- and two-stem calculations and then comparing costs.
	Locating Information	5 (range = 3-6)	At Level 5, employees must read complicated workplace graphics, such as detailed forms, tables, graphs, diagrams, instrument gauges, and maps. Employees are required to summarize and/or compare information and trends in a single graphic, summarize and/or compare information and trends presented in more than one workplace graphic, such as a bar chart and a table showing related information, and sort through distracting information.

Attachment II - Local Partner Programs

Mandatory Virginia Workforce Network Partner Program	Local Partner Entity
Adult Education and Literacy	Local School Boards
Postsecondary Vocational Education	Local Community Colleges
Community Services Block Grant Act employment & training programs	Community Action Agencies
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Local Departments of Social Services
Title I of the Rehabilitation Act	Department of Rehabilitative Services & the Department for the Visually Handicapped
Title V of the Older Americans Act	Area Agencies on Aging or Nationally Funded Older Worker Employment & Training Programs in the area.
WIA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker & Youth Programs	WIB and/or the Local Government Grant Recipient
Employment Service (Wagner-Peyser), Unemployment Compensation, Trade Adjustment/NAFTA, Veterans Employment & Training Programs	Local Virginia Employment Commission Field Offices
U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) Employment & Training Programs	Redevelopment & Housing Authorities
Nationally Funded WIA Title I Program Entities, present in the area	Job Corps, Migrant & Seasonal Farm Workers Programs, Indian & Native American Programs, Veterans Programs and Youth Opportunity Grants

Attachment III - Local Career Readiness Certificate Administration Agreement Items

NOTE: This list outlines key items to be considered when establishing a local Career Readiness Certificate Administration Agreement. The items listed are only suggestions, and may vary by Community College based upon local needs.

- Purpose of the agreement
- Parties to the agreement: Community College, WIB, One-Stop Operator(s), Program Partners, Other
- Duration of agreement
- Signatures and date
- Elements of the agreement:
  - Local process to obtain the CRC
    - Assessments will only be administered at locations that meet ACT testing guidelines
    - Assessments will be administered at one-stop career center based upon identified customer needs (identify method to determine need)
    - Registration and Release Form
    - Develop CRC participant flowchart
    - Other
  - Specific CRC services provided by each party
    - Community College – (1) score non-computer-based WK assessments, (2) enter participant data, (3) print and distribute CRC to participant, (4) serve as primary CRC contact for local area and state administrative purposes
    - WIB
    - One-Stop Operator
    - Program Partner (See Attachment II for list of partners) – How CRC will be integrated into individual services and/or programs
    - Other
  - Costs to provide CRC services
    - Administering CRC WorkKeys assessments
    - Scoring CRC WorkKeys assessments
    - CRC participant data entry
    - Printing and providing the CRC (includes original CRC and five copies)
    - Reprinting the CRC
    - Other
  - Specific CRC roles and responsibilities of each party
    - Marketing and Outreach to employers and career seekers
    - Education of CRC to program partners, economic developers and other stakeholders
    - Statement by community college that it will adhere to all administering, proctoring and scoring standards set forth by ACT
    - Access to participant data
    - Other
  - Identification of how CRC process will be integrated into local processes/programs